

A COVENANT WITH DEATH...

Part III

*The Mariners Tried it in Jonah's Day
Man Is Trying It Today
Antichrist Will Try It Yet Future
BUT...*

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it” (Isa. 28:15-18).

“And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them” (Jonah 1:12, 13).

Numerous Christians, usually connected after some fashion with what is often called “Christian Zionism,” view the presence of an Israeli nation in the Middle East as *an on-going work of God*. And those looking back in history would usually see this as *a work begun under Theodor Herzl about 1895, continued through the 1917 Balfour Declaration, and brought to fruition during modern times on May 14, 1948 when Israel declared statehood*.

Two Types of Christian Zionists

Many of these individuals see that which began in 1948 and has continued down through the years as a beginning and continuing fulfillment of God’s numerous promises to one day restore His people to their land, never to uproot them from this land again, quoting sections of Scripture such as Ezek. 37:1-28; Amos 9:11-15.

And these same individuals usually see a recclamation of parts of the land for agricultural and other purposes as God, through the work of those who have returned and tilled this land, progressively fulfilling His promise to heal the land as well (Lev. 26:40-42; II Chron. 7:12-14; Isa. 35:1, 2).

A number of other Bible students though would somewhat draw back from the all-inclusiveness of the preceding — because of the Jewish people’s present unrepentant and unbelieving state — and *see God restoring His people to their land only in accordance with certain, particular promises to do so*.

They would see *God restoring His people in accordance with a handful of promises which they look upon as a restoration of the people in an unrepentant and unbelieving state, to then be dealt with by God during the Tribulation in or near the land (e.g., in Petra) relative to their repentance and salvation, with the Messianic Era in view* (sections of Scripture such as Isa. 11:11, 12; Ezek. 20:33-38; 22:17-22; 36:22-28; Zeph. 2:1-3 are those usually referenced).

Thus, one might say that there are two groups

within the one larger group. Both though are making the same basic mistake, *for THERE ARE NO SCRIPTURES having to do with God restoring any of the Jewish people prior to the time of Christ’s return*. There couldn’t be, for this would be completely contrary to so much of the whole of Scripture, particularly the types (e.g., Gen. 21-25; 28:15-31:3; Ex. 1-40; Num. 35). God would be acting completely contrary to His revealed Word.

Both of the preceding groups take different Scriptures having to do with future events pertaining to Israel which occur either shortly before or following Christ’s return and apply them to events having occurred since May 14, 1948. Doing this, they invariably ignore the types and the festivals in Lev. 23 in conjunction with the types. Such can only be evident, *for had they paid proper attention to how God had previously structured His Word in this respect, they wouldn’t be making the mistakes that they end up making*.

And, making mistakes of this nature, they usually end up not properly separating things which are not the same at all.

Note distinctions in three interrelated realms where confusion often exists in connection with Israel, the Tribulation, and Christ’s return:

- 1) *Israel’s national repentance* (occurs during the Tribulation, with the Jewish people out among the nations, before Christ returns [cf. Ex. 3:1-10; II Chron. 7:14; Matt. 21:9; 23:39]).
- 2) *Israel’s national conversion, salvation* (occurs after the Tribulation, following Christ’s return, with the Jewish people still in the diaspora, out among the nations [cf. Ex. 12:1ff; Isa. 66:8]).
- 3) *Israel’s national cleansing* (occurs after the Jewish people have been removed from the nations and restored to their own land [cf. Ex. 40:2, 12, 30-38; Ezek. 36:24-31; Zech. 12:10-14; Rev. 17:16-18]).

But, to bring the Jewish people to a mindset where the first of the three preceding will be realized, allowing the second and third to be realized, God's corrective measures have to be carried to completion *in His way and time*. And, as previously seen, this has to do with Gentile persecution during the coming Tribulation, with the whole house of Israel (both those presently in the land and those already out among the nations) scattered throughout Gentile lands together.

This is simply GOD'S REVEALED WAY to effect the correction of His wayward son (E x. 4:22, 23; Hos. 11:1). NO OTHER WAY EXISTS!

(At the time of the inception of the Israeli nation in Egypt during Moses' day, God established, in an unchangeable manner — both before and following this time [in Egypt before and at the time of the inception of the nation, and in the wilderness following the Exodus] — *HOW and WHERE He would deal with His people to effect correction when correction was necessary* [something that has subsequently been necessary in the camp of Israel time after time down through the years].

His people would either be uprooted from their land and driven out among the nations, with correction effected through Gentile persecution in Gentile lands; or, He would allow a Gentile nation to come into Israel's own land, subjugate and persecute the Jewish people in their land, effecting correction in this manner.

Thus, correction, when necessary, has always been done through *Gentile persecution*, carried out by either uprooting His people from their land and driving them out among the nations [e.g., the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities] or allowing the Gentiles to come into the land and subjugate the people in their own land [e.g., the numerous instances during the time of the Judges].

And this twofold manner of bringing about the correction of His wayward son through Gentile persecution, is *the established and only means which God has ever used or ever will use*. God simply does not change the way He carries out His established works.

And, with this in mind, note that the preceding would run completely counter to the things believed by numerous Christians today about the existing nation of Israel:

- 1) God has restored and is continuing to restore them to the land never to be uprooted from this land again.
- 2) Or, God has restored and continues to restore them to the land in their unrepentant and unbelieving state to later deal with them either in the land or in a nearby place like Petra.

Either of the preceding would be completely out of line with how God deals with His people in this respect, *UNLESS, on the second, the Gentiles are allowed to come into either place [the land, or a place like Petra] and subjugate the Jewish people, effecting correction through Gentile persecution after this fashion*.

But, a person is not left with possible or unknown thoughts on the second of the two preceding views that individuals hold concerning the present existing Jewish nation in the Middle East, for Scripture clearly reveals how God will deal with the 6,000,000 or so Jews forming this nation. These Jews are going to be uprooted from their land in the middle of the Tribulation; and the ones not slain will be driven back out among the Gentile nations where the remainder of world Jewry, the eight or nine million already scattered among these nations, currently resides. Then, at that time, God will deal with *the WHOLE house of Israel together, through Gentile persecution, out among the nations*.

God is simply NOT going to deal with these Jews in the land, nor in Petra, nor anyplace else OTHER THAN out among the nations. Scripture is quite clear on this matter [Matt. 24:15ff; Luke 21:20ff; Rev. 12:1ff].

There is an evident reason why God has allowed the events of May 14, 1948 and beyond to occur though. And it does have to do with the whole scenario of God dealing with His son through Gentile persecution, effecting correction; *but this correction will be effected out among the nations where all world Jewry can be dealt with together, at the same time, not with just the 6,000,000 presently in the land.*)

Christians, Zionism, the World

Christians who would align themselves with Zionism as it exists today, *in one respect, are different than the world; but, in another respect, they are no different*.

Being *different* than the world, these Christians have some understanding of and dependence upon what Scripture has to say about the belief and position which they hold relative to Israel, though the manner in which they view different Scriptures has invariably been perverted to varying degrees.

But being *no different* than the world, these Christians contend for and often actively uphold Israel's right to be in that land at the present time. And, as previously stated, a large percentage of them believe and teach that Israel is in the land to stay, never to be uprooted from their land again.

Thus, these Christians (the previously referenced large percentage) and the world (mainly the western world) come together at this point, both of a similar mindset regarding *Israel's right to be in and remain in that land*.

The world would, of course, view *this right* solely from a naturalistic standpoint; and these Christians would view *this right* from the standpoint of a 4,000-year-old land-grant given to the Jewish people through an unconditional covenant by God Himself.

But these Christians, seeing the Jewish people's presence in the land as a work of God, contending for their right to remain in that land (their own land), which almost all do, *are making EXACTLY the same mistake as the world finds itself making with their Middle East peace efforts*. They, as the world, are trying to do what the men on board the ship tried to do during Jonah's day.

Those during Jonah's day DIDN'T BELIEVE the prophet, and those today DON'T BELIEVE the Prophets. Accordingly, it didn't work then, and it won't work today.

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